

NARO MINDED



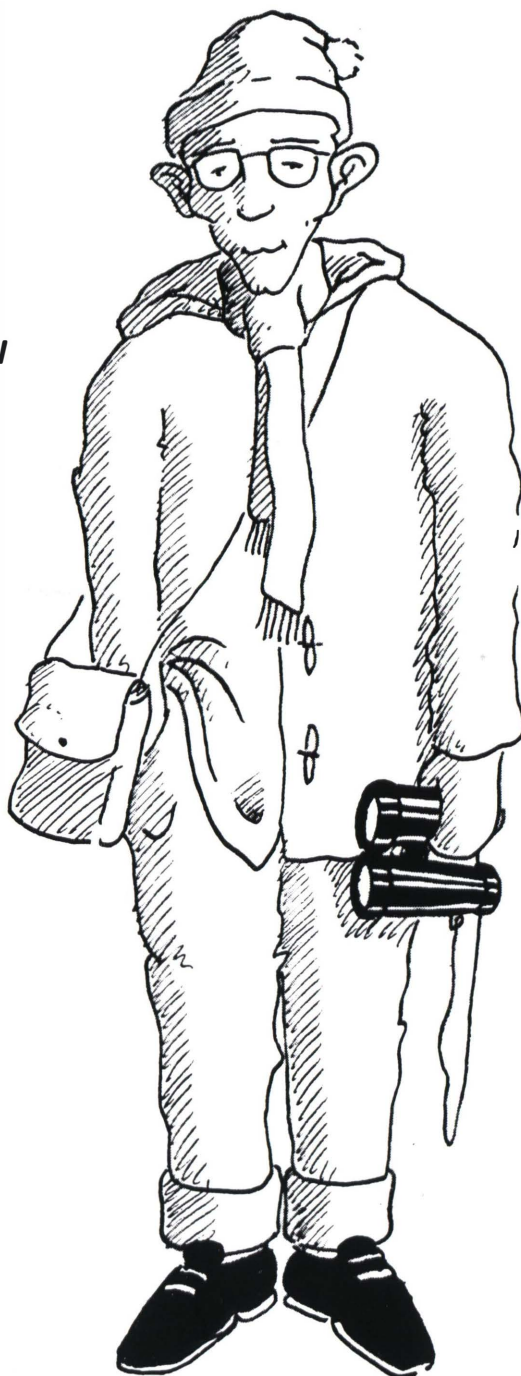
Open minded, not empty headed

The Journal of the Northern Anomalies Research Organisation

Issue 7 October 1997 £1.50

**SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL!
VIBRATING CARAVANS IN
NORTH WALES**

**WHOOOOO'VE BEEN
FRAMED - DEVELOPING
PARANORMAL PICCIES**



**MEN IN BLACK:
DOES TOMMY LEE JONES
WORK FOR DI-55?**

**SINE OF THE TIMES?
THE FLYING TRIANGLES**

Has anyone seen the 3.55 from Mars?

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the new-look, come out with all guns-a-blazing, NARO Minded. Firstly, a hasty mention for the disastrous 'NARO Files' conference we staged on Saturday 20th September, where we managed to 'pack-in' a bank-balance busting *eight* people. "Serves you right!" came the cry from the incestuous alliance of north-west UFO groups, so we had a taste of our own medicine - but there's no bitter aftertaste.

Ufology, as we all know, is a *very, very, very* serious business. We recently attended a presentation by one young turk of ufology that impressed this upon us with great force. He compared *ufology* with the humble birth of *Greenpeace* - "only six members in a London flat" - thereby implying an equity of relevance between *flying saucers* and *physically saving planet Earth from noxious fumes*. Get real, son: 'flying saucers' are *funny*, saving the Earth whatever one's geo-politics, is a grim business. Perhaps that's why there were 30 people at the venue when Greenpeace had just six?

Lone Rangers abounded this summer, as two well-known writers in fortean circles - Kevin McClure and Andy Roberts - launched newsletters aimed squarely at ufology's nether regions. Andy's 'The Armchair Ufologist' takes a look at the politics of UFO groups, with BUFORA coming off worse than most. Kevin, meanwhile, has done an exemplary job of getting to the bottom of much of the quasi-scientific ramblings of the proponents of the physical reality of aliens, demonstrating that much of the so-called 'research' undertaken by people such as Derrel Sims, has no solid foundation whatsoever. But then maybe we should expect nothing less from Sims - who claims to have 'had combat' with an alien called 'Mondoz'; no doubt he used his special 'holographic learning technique' to defeat it.[1] Take the 'black light' for example. This is employed by various abduction researchers to 'detect' abductees who have been 'tagged' by the aliens. The light is actually ultra-violet light (known in medicine as Wood's lamp after the US physicist who invented it), and is used to detect fungal infections in human skin. It would appear then, that all that is being detected is skin disease, not some intergalactic cattle branding system.

The above *again* draws attention to the problem of *some* UFO investigators having an inadequate knowledge of science and its applications. This was highlighted at the recent BUFORA conference in Sheffield in a talk given by Derek Sheffield. He was speaking about the Belgian triangles [recently summarised in an excellent article by Wim Van Utrecht in 'The New Ufologist']. In his closing comments, after suffering a barrage of criticism from two well-informed Aerospace Engineers in the audience, Derek hypothesised that if two spaceships were to move away from each other at half the speed of light, then surely they are moving at the speed of light? Well, *no actually Derek*. If a car is driving away from a train at 50 mph and the train is also moving at 50 mph then neither one is moving at 100 mph. *Relative* to the car, the train is indeed travelling at 100 mph and vice versa. Remedial physics lessons would seem to be in order for *some* UFO researchers. This also highlights another interesting facet of investigator belief systems. Is Derek trying to imply that Einstein was wrong? Perhaps Derek subscribes to the loony idea that preoccupies only the most paranoid ufologists: that wonderful, utopia-making discoveries in physics are being suppressed by the government. Is this another example of the way British ufology is being influenced by imported Americana?

When *are* ufologists going to wake up to psycho-social truth about UFOs and in particular abduction reports? Whether abductions themselves are 'real' events, there is little doubt they are flourishing in this world of credulous investigation by guru-like abduction researchers. Who will be the first to be sued by a witness? The self-corrupting world of ufology has almost reached critical mass, just in time for the millennium.

Lt.Col Andy Blunn
Captain Mervyn Gale
FORT GEORGE MEADE
MARYLAND USA. :(F.O.I.A. **REQUEST DENIED**)

* This information was gleaned from Jim Moseley's 'Saucer Smear', in the form of a letter from a researcher by the name of John Shirley. Modesty forbids quoting Shirley's full statement, in which he equates Sims to a 'Male Bovine Faecal artist.'

NARO Minded

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NARO Minded is produced by members of the **Northern Anomalies Research Organisation (NARO).**

NARO was formed in 1963 in response to a growing interest in the UFO phenomenon. Indeed until recently it was called MUFORA - the Manchester UFO Research Association. This was appropriate at a time when UFOs were perceived to be 'nuts and bolts' spacecraft. In recent years the membership has become all too aware of the psychic dynamics present in many UFO experiences. Entity encounters in particular share a number of common features with non-UFO phenomena such as near-death experiences (NDEs). In recognition of this, MUFORA changed to the Northern Anomalies Research Organisation in January 1994 and became affiliated to the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena (ASSAP). NARO is composed of around 20 members from all walks of life, who investigate claims of the paranormal on a part-time basis. Membership is strictly regulated and there is currently a waiting list. Only activists need apply, NARO is not a talking shop.

The aims of the organisation are as follows:

To investigate with a view to finding rational explanations for alleged phenomena where appropriate.

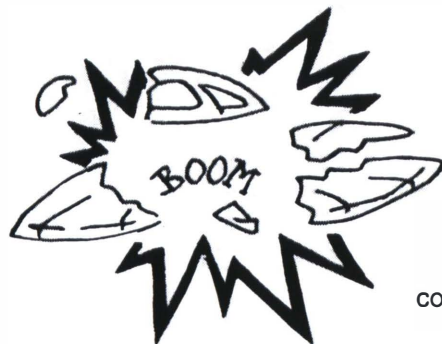
To document cases for research purposes.

To educate the media and the public of the subtleties and complexities of the paranormal.

To convince the scientific community of the objective reality of some cases of phenomena.

To a lesser or greater degree these aims are already being achieved. NARO has around 2000 cases on file and scientists regularly give NARO their expertise. The latter demonstrates a shift in attitude regarding anomalies which appear to defy rational explanation.

Peter .A. Hough
Chairman



SHORTS

compiled by Andy Blunn & Mervyn Gale

PROMINENT LOCAL SCIENTIST PENS DEBUT TOME

Rumour has it that MAPIT cum SEP supremo Stephen Mera is so desperate to make it into print that he's paying a 'vanity publishing' house to run off some copies of his 'Guide for Paranormal Investigators'. We look forward to this book eagerly - presumably the three books he *already* claims to have written will be eclipsed by this epoch-making work. Ufology will never be the same again; academic respectability must surely follow. We have long suspected that Stephen has it in him to be Darwin of flying saucers - although Linnaeus might be nearer the mark, fond as Steve is of categorising everything. Let's hope they have a good proof-reader.

KEVIN STICKS THE BOOT IN

Kevin McClure, who's started more magazines than 'Sightings' has readers, has been and gone and done it again! His latest, 'Abduction Watch', has met with the disapproval of Pauline Delcour - Minn. The fey Ms.Minn was so horrified by Kev's no-nonsense, take-no-prisoners take on the abduction scene, that she told our reporter she would have to 'send him a blessing' through the ether, after leafing through our copy at the MiB day.

BUFORA BOTTLES OUT

Larry Warren, not known for being a shrinking violet, almost mentioned the J-word on stage in Sheffield. He apologised immediately, but the cat was out of the bag. This cruddy conference managed to go on and on about Rendle-sham without mentioning Jenny Randles' pioneer work - rather like talking triangles without mentioning Tim Matthews. Apparently, Jenny is persona non grata in BUFORA circles because she isn't a drivelling idiot. There was the usual rubbish about the moon, blah de blah blah. Oh, and Derrel Sims was picking through abductees' snot again.

CRAPPY LETTERS

If one was to read the September edition of 'Alien Encounters' magazine, one would be treated to a po-faced discussion of why aliens are interested in human graveyards. Editor Nina Pendred believes the aliens wish to remove implants from stiffs, or else locate their missing souls. The only interest aliens have in graveyards can be seen in Ed Wood's famous 'Plan 9 from Outer Space', wherein dazed ex-wrestler Tor Jonsen stumbles about a cardboard graveyard, led on by an alien bleeping noise. Get real Nina.

Sceptical correspondent Paul Yates is confidently told that a six month subscription will turn him into a believer, all the same.

Many letters to these glossy, no-brain UFO fanzines seem to be from school children. Someone should stop their pocket money, or else insist they tidy their rooms.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ROBERTS

September saw the publication of another excellent 'Armchair Ufologist' by ufological couch potato Andy Roberts. This occasional journal has mortified bad researchers everywhere, instilling in them the feeling of impending doom one gets when you know you're for the high jump. BUFORA - bashing is the name of the game where TAU is concerned. From Sir Philip of Mantilli to underground bases anorak Matthew Williams (whom Roberts points out believes "the fact that military bases have underground tunnels under them is somehow ufologically relevant"), no-one is safe. Credulous researchers everywhere beware!

LUFOS CAMPAIGN

The Lancashire UFO Society have launched a campaign to obtain more UFO related info from the British Government's unreleased files. The plan, which apparently involves eight other North West UFO groups, is to go to London to protest against secrecy involving alleged government interest in the phenomenon. For more details contact LUFOS.

MANTLE RESIGNS

Sir Philip of Mantilli has resigned from BUFORA. Miraculously, Mantle was *re-elected* at a recent BUFORA committee meeting. Unable to cope, three BUFORA top-dogs resigned in protest forcing Philip to admit defeat. What will Andy Roberts write about now?!

ERIC BECKJORD

American Ufologist Eric Beckjord has gained the *real* name of 'Philip Spencer', the former police officer who allegedly witnessed a strange green being on Ilkley Moor almost 10 years ago. Beckjord approached Arthur Tomlinson of DIGAP who gave Beckjord the witnesses former home address where his parents now reside. His parents were unaware of 'Philip's' encounter - until now. 'Philip' is, understandably, absolutely furious. Beckjord wrote to 'Philip' criticising Peter Hough, saying that he should turn copyright of the photo over to him.

MARA MAG

The Merseyside Anomalies Research Association will shortly be launching their own research journal. The mag will give this relatively new - although very knowledgeable - group a voice. Tony Eccles and Mark Glover spearhead MARA and they have already investigated some very interesting reports. For more information contact Tony @ 52 Hawthorne Avenue, Halewood, Merseyside, L26 9XD. See also Tony's article in this issue.

MAGS.....MAGS.....MAGS GALORE!

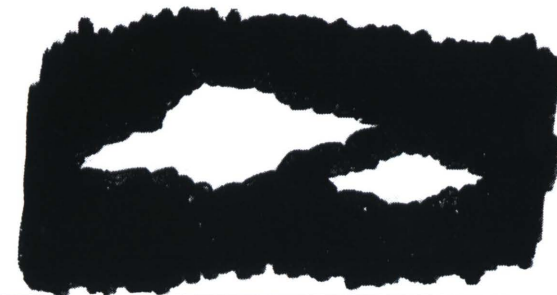
Rory Lushman, who runs the Pendle and Hyburn UFO Group, is putting together a magazine. Entitled 'Down to Earth', it promises to be an interesting read. More details will be given when available.

LAPIS CONFERENCE

The weekend of November 15th/16th sees the annual UFO-fest that is the LAPIS International UFO conference. The usual suspects will be speaking about conspiracies, lunar paranoia and the like. For more details contact LAPIS.

OLD SPACE

A French con-man has been arrested after making £25,000 selling "UFO repellent". Rene Morant of Nice sold gullible customers ordinary batteries, telling them that they would "keep aliens away" if they were left on the windowsill. His asking price was £35 per "repellent". He has been charged with fraud.



A Strange Encounter at Halton

When witnesses fail to produce vital medical evidence they claim would prove they are telling the truth, it only further reduces the credibility of their claims. Four men have placed ANTHONY ECCLES in just such a predicament.....

It is normal for any investigator to present their research findings to an audience at a seminar or conference. It is one of the best, if not quickest ways, of sharing information, and is guaranteed to attract a variety of interests. At a small, yet well run, one day mini-conference in Halton last November, I presented a talk regarding the Merseyside sightings my colleagues and I have been carefully looking into. It was there that I was approached by two men who had a bizarre tale to tell - strange enough to even question my belief into how honest these men were. But the question that still remains with me today is what do these men gain by telling me their tale?

Now before their tale is told, I would like to illustrate why I was, and am a little now, suspicious of these men. Both men initially approached me after I ended my talk, and wanted to speak to me alone by the bar, but none of us were drinking. Outside in the cold air they began to tell me of their experiences, and yet nothing was said in any logical order as they had so much to say and it seemed as if we had little time to talk. My agreement with these men was that I would look into their experiences and would not reveal who they were and I would keep what personal details I knew of them secret. This is a rule all investigators abide by, or should. However, I was very surprised by how paranoid these men were, and how suspicious of UFO Investigators they were, but after a number of meetings I understood why and things began to make a little sense. They wanted to find out what I was like first before they could trust me with all their details. It was this lack of trust I did not like because they wouldn't give me their phone number nor address. Whenever they did call me they would dial a cover prefix so that I could not trace their call using 1471, the one time I *did* trace their call it was to a public phone box in the Halton district. If I was not at home they refused to leave any message on the answering machine. These men were very nervous and joked too much about their experiences, because it was the only way these men could cope with their experiences that had occurred from 1990 to 1993. What makes matters more serious is that these men claim that their experiences have left them with serious injuries to their bodies. They are presently still under medication.

So my dilemma is this: have these men had real unexplainable experiences which have caused them harm? Are they hoaxing it? Are they deceiving me in an attempt to make me appear as a gullible and credulous investigator? I do not know. But I sat with three of the four in a café near my home. It was there, with tea and toast, that I recorded part of their experiences, and it is here that I relate it in accordance with what these three men had said. It is up to you to make up your own minds - your suggestions would be greatly appreciated. The case is presently inconclusive and on-going.

In 1993, four men drive in two cars on the Mold-Denbigh road, the A541, and continue on towards a field in North Wales just off the A544 somewhere near Llansannan. These men go at certain time during the week to spend some time in the countryside there. As a favour to the farmer who allows them to stay there, they also trap rabbits for him. They do not use tents but a large caravan which comfortably sleeps four, it dates back to the sixties and has a 12V electrical supply.

At times strange lights have been seen. Jack, Doug, Kevin and Jay claim to have seen what they describe as "Mysterion lights" moving slowly across the fields. Large white circular lights that appear suddenly on the surface of the ground, move slowly in one direction then vanish. These men had powerful torches with them - torches that would normally be used by hunters, and they shone them in the direction of the lights; and because they could cover such a considerable distance, they would be able to determine if anybody else was there. But no one else could be found: the four men were alone in the fields that evening.

At other times weird green beams of light have been seen whilst they were setting the traps. Jack recalls one incident whereby a straight green beam of light came out of the ground and shot straight up into the air only to hover for a short while just above head height and then vanish upwards.

On a number of evenings the four men have awoken with unusual symptoms. They recall unusual and erratic sleep patterns, but would ache with physical aching, headaches, eye pains, and anal bleeding. The ailments had continued after their experiences; Jay had to go to the optician for an eye complaint after returning with the three others from Wales. The optician handed Jay a letter and referred him to a specialist, as a black mark had been found at the back of his left eye. An appointment had been made for Jay to see an Ophthalmic Surgeon very quickly. The surgeon had asked a number of questions and conducted a series of tests. Jay was told that the back of the retina was burnt out. One way of obtaining such an injury would be for a person to remain in a very dark room and look at a lightbulb for a week or stare at the sun. His medication continues.

Kevin had a yellow spot on his tonsils. At Walton hospital the doctors ran a series of tests that came back negative and no medicines were working. A biopsy was taken and the throat was sprayed with morphine (?). Kevin was on an intravenous drip whilst he stayed in hospital under observation. For three weeks he was unable to eat properly because his throat had swollen and he was in pain. He was incapable of swallowing solids easily and found it very difficult to breathe. The interior of his throat resembled the skin on custard. Yet some time later, he was allowed to return home and was able to eat a ploughman's lunch followed by something he didn't like - yoghurt. The painkillers were working but they had little effect the following day, when all he had to eat were the remains of a half-consumed pot of warm yoghurt. His ailment went away within a very short period of time, even after the inspection and treatment from one doctor. A week later the symptoms started up again and he was readmitted to hospital. The consultants joked as they apparently had no idea what Kevin was suffering from. All the same tests were taken, this time by a junior doctor, but *again* the results came back negative. (It was yoghurt that cleared it again, this time for good.)

On another evening Jay had a pain in his stomach and was taken straight to hospital where he was diagnosed with appendicitis. There were red dots, or straw marks, on his arms. The peculiar thing about this was that the doctor had asked Jay if he had any blood problems. Blood tests were conducted and they revealed that Jay had a low white cell count. The question then asked by the doctor was, "Have you been on any anti-gravity rides recently?" - as the symptoms were very similar, apparently.

All the men have suffered high sugar levels in their urine, and are now showing signs of diabetic tendencies since their experiences, not before. All men have kidney problems. Jay has also had, and is still having, operations on his knees. Initially the men believed they were suffering from aluminium poisoning which was causing them to suffer all of these problems. There were times, they recall, when they had been bleeding from the anus and their urine had a gel-like consistency. At other times they would awake with a cigarette in their hands, but not remember rolling the cigarettes in the first place. It was Jake that completely gutted and cleaned out the caravan, but to no avail - the experiences still continued.

But all of these incidents occurred after one particular evening. At around eleven, Jack was alone cooking in the caravan, whilst the other three were fixing a JCB nearby - both groups kept a CB radio to communicate with. After a short while the caravan began to vibrate. Jack thought that it was the wind, but the caravan was well sheltered due to its position within the field. However, Jack looked outside and could not see any of the trees being blown by the wind. Instead, the vibrations were changing into a strong shaking and Jack could feel himself becoming off-balance. Jack had suspected that something was not right, and when he stood up, he realised that everything was lifting up, including the caravan. Using the CB he called the others, but for fifteen to thirty minutes he was unable to contact them. When he did the three men thought that Jack was playing around until they heard him asking for help in a very scared tone. The other men returned to the caravan to find Jack hysterical. Perhaps he believed that the others had been playing a trick on him, so they all got outside and tried to shake the vehicle but were unable to

copy the violent shaking Jack had experienced.

Jake wanted to return home, so all the other men packed their things and returned home in the two cars, Jay and Kevin in front car, Doug and Jack in second. They were driving eastbound on the A541 and had passed a set of traffic lights whereupon the road follows a bend in the hill and then it flattens out. As they passed Afon-wen, Kevin was the first to see a solid black object rise over the hill to his left (the north-east) and appear to be parallel with both of the cars. The object was tube like and very black but with a green luminescence around the centre of the body. The four men did not know how they managed to continue driving on the twisting roads at fifty miles per hour, but one of them remembers another car coming from the opposite direction and saw that driver look to his right and view the strange aerial object; his expression of complete surprise was observed. Although the craft was seen by all four men, not all of them appear to have remembered the same details. Doug and Jay remember seeing only two 'windows' on the side of the craft, Doug and Jay remember seeing four in a straight row, while Kevin doesn't recall seeing any. The only explanation they could offer, and it was one expressed purely as an hypothesis, was that they were actually taken from their cars and taken on board the craft. Because of their different positions, they were unable to see things from the same angle. They clearly do remember seeing a bright white light emanate from the back of the object and come very close to the cars, so much so that the four men all claim that the white light was travelling at the same speed as the cars and flying parallel with them too. I asked them a question at this point: what do they believe had happened to them at that moment in time? Their reply was they did not know. I then asked if they believed they had been abducted (the reason for this will become apparent later); logically speaking, they said, they did not, but someone else inside was telling them otherwise. Yet asking them about any strange memories they may have had about the incident, they replied that they do not remember having any. The object eventually disappeared to the south-east around the area of Nannerch.

Normally everything that happens to them, mundane or unusual, is recorded on Doug's wall calendar and Kevin's sporting register, which he had kept since 1979/80. Kevin believed that he had recorded the events of that evening within this register, yet there are no signs of it today in the register. So what had happened?

The farmer who owned the land became involved as the four men reported seeing a number of sheep that also appeared to be suffering from some type of sickness. But the farmer inspected all of his land, with the exception of the land the four men had been staying in. Why? The farmer refused to say, refused to go on it and prevented his wife from going there by telling her that there was a motorway being built there. Today, I am told, the whole of that land including the large field the four men were on, is being bought by North-West Water for the purpose of turning it into a reservoir.

The following year, the men would not return to Wales. They abandoned their caravan there as well, and bought a new one. Instead, they went to Shropshire, and the following year to Yorkshire, to a field not too far away from a well-known listening post. The only problem was, Shropshire caused them concern, as did the land in Yorkshire; for their experiences continued even there, with all of the strange lights and events continuing. Today, that has stopped, to their relief. They wanted to tell someone about their experiences but were unsure who to contact. With many groups now in existence they decided to contact Arthur Tomlinson after twelve months of saying nothing to anyone. He was able to put them in touch with one group that is still questing for the truth and who shall remain unnamed. Since coming into contact with this group all sorts of things have 'happened' which the four men did not enjoy experiencing.

The men were told by this group that they were under a period of surveillance. They had noticed that they were being followed by certain cars. One in particular, a blue Mondeo, parked itself outside one of the homes of the four men. It had no tax disc - just a phone and fax number. A week later, the same model car (but in a different colour) was again parked outside the house. Instead of a tax disc, it had a computer number on it. It did not have an issuing stamp or issue number on it. A black Granada with blackened out windows was outside the house. When approached, the occupants identified themselves as 'police officers' but would not say anymore. Two days later, Jay went to make himself a drink and noticed the same black car outside the

house parked on the kerb. It was there after midnight until about half past eight to nine in the morning, everyday for a week. Kevin's wife was a legal executive and had discovered through some of her colleagues that her house was under surveillance by the Ministry of Defence. The telephone and fax numbers of the Mondeo had indeed belonged to the MoD. Surveillance had stopped by October last year. However, an investigator from the UFO group the four men had contacted - namely Billy Took - had informed them that they could fill in a form and send it to the MoD who will tell you if you are under any form of surveillance whatsoever. He further informed them that the phone they were using was not secure and to ring BT and ask them if their line was being tapped. Billy Took wanted a meeting with the four men to discuss their experiences. The meeting went ahead and Mr. Took told them about the procedures 'aliens' had used to 'remove limbs' and place them back. He further told them how filthy they were as creatures, how unhygienic their spacecraft were, and that their anal bleeding was due to an anal probe that they probably all shared. At another time, Jack contacted Mr. Took and the telephone line went dead. A while later it came back on. The computer went dead, followed again by the telephone. Kevin then returned the call to discover that something was going on. Mr. Took had told him that he had lost power in the one room whereas the rest of the house had remained unaffected; it was a localised event, and throughout he could hear musical notes (read John Keel). It was then that Mr. Took did not want to be involved in the case any longer.

Kevin received a phonecall from the head of the group who told them that their experience was bigger than the case of 1980 (Alan Godfrey, I assume), and that Central TV, Channel Four and Sky would be knocking on their door. His proposal was to take the four men and their wives and put them up for a night in a hotel in Leeds on Monday 25th November 1996. There, in Leeds, they would have their accommodation and regressive hypnosis paid for. All of this was to lead to an initial two page spread in their magazine with photographs. The offer was turned down as the four men did not want to have any media attention, and a magazine spread would only lead to them having a bit of money in their pockets, a lot of ridicule and their story becoming less credible.

Come November 1996, and there was a one day mini-conference in Halton, Cheshire. During my conversation with these men they had told me that they were totally suspicious of UFO investigators, as some of them had behaved very oddly, attempting to convince these men of ideas that sound so far-fetched. But these men were scared. If they had been abducted they could only think of large anal probes and limb removal (which would have caused them a lot of pain) and as for regressive hypnosis they would refuse this for fear of 'remembering' the pain. These men were also told by the group's head that they could not come that close to a UFO without being abducted. Of course, I do not believe what they have been told by the incompetent, other investigators. But these men previously knew nothing about the UFO/abduction phenomenon, so when approached by the ideas of this group they of course remained frightened, adding only to the fear they already have from the experiences they have shared. So their paranoia was understandable.

Presently, I am waiting for the men to show me some form of medical documents to show that they have, as they have said, gone through all of this medical attention. I have to - if I wish to remain objective, at the moment I only have their word, which is fine - for the time being. But they are uncertain of what really caused their unusual experiences, attributing them to aliens because of the one object they witnessed. Doug actually allowed me to see the prescription the doctor had given him that day for his ailment - out of all the three men I have met it is Doug who comes across as the more down-to-earth and sincere. The medication he is taking may not at all be connected to the events of a few years ago. One of them is a beta-blocker, used primarily to regularise the heart beat and to treat and prevent angina pectoris, it is also used to relieve the symptoms of excess thyroid hormones; another is an anti-depressant that also has mild sedative properties; it can also be used to treat phobic or obsessional states and to try and reduce the incidence of cataplexy in narcoleptic patients. A third medicine used is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory non-narcotic analgesic drug used to treat rheumatic and muscular pain caused by the inflammation and/or bone degeneration at the joints. A fourth is a cream that relieves the pain caused by muscle and joint disorders, and the fifth is a compound analgesic (a pain killer).

The case is inconclusive but has tested my thoughts compared to that brought on by other cases. I have never been more sceptical - until now. Whether there is a solid foundation to this case which is worthy of full investigation with a unique set of results, or whether it will remain just another story amongst the hundreds of other stories that form the UFO folklore mattress we have yet to see. But it has enabled me to ask many questions about the witness, the subject and about myself.

Anyone wishing to correspond with Tony can write to him at:

52 Hawthorne Avenue, Halewood, Liverpool, L26 9XD

Tony is a member of BUFORA, the Merseyside Anomalies Research Association (MARA) and a member of NARO.

Andy Blunn writes:-

The witnesses' contact with the other research group and their subsequent reaction to the suggestions put forward demonstrate the problems that ufology has to overcome if it is ever to make any progress. Telling witnesses that the aliens are filthy creatures and that they have unhygienic spacecraft is the kind of garbage that currently fuels the lunatic fringe of American ufology. The belief in inter-governmental conspiracies, underground bases and the like is vigorously promoted in the paranoid newsstand magazines. As Kevin McClure says "...someone, it seems, has decided it's Britain's turn to suffer this madness." And it is madness. There isn't one shred of convincing evidence to support any of the 'theories' put forward. Ufology needs a refit, a shake-up, a new common sense approach. One where meticulous investigation replaces credulous guesswork and speculation.

Perhaps investigator training courses are one answer? But, as with everything in ufology, you have to be careful who is offering such courses. Mervyn and I were approached by two 'students' of such a course at a recent 'UFO day'. One of them claimed to be a trainee pilot for British Airways. When we quizzed him about the 'course' he was undertaking he complained about all the 'big words' he was being asked to learn. He looked bemused when we mentioned the word 'entity' - however everything became clear when we replaced entity with 'space alien'. This is not a joke. What we have is a situation where unqualified individuals are offering investigator training courses to people who are genuinely interested in the paranormal and who have been sucked in to believing that these people are 'experts' on all things UFO related. There are - unfortunately - no qualifications required to become a UFO investigator and one needs no formal scientific training whatsoever.

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COMMENT CORNER

"Worth every penny.."

Kevin McClure on NARO Minded

"Don't these people ever go out?"

Man overheard at X-Files convention

**"These morons should not be allowed inside a public toilet let
alone a conference.."**

Eric Morris, Director of the ARCC and Chairman of the new, slimline
BUFOSC on NARO members

Manche X ter '97:

the unofficial UK X-Files Convention

As guests at the anorak infested X-Philes convention, Andy Blunn and Mervyn Gale shared the stage with Jenny Randles and the government's UFO eXpert Nick Pope. But did the 700 strong crowd really give a toss? Andy Blunn found out.....

'We want a local group to give us a local perspective on the paranormal', so said the organisers of the first X-Files convention in the UK, held in Manchester on the weekend of July 5th/6th. Alicia Leigh was originally pencilled in - but she went swanning off to Scotland for the week. And so I reluctantly volunteered to pit my wits against two of the country's best-known ufologists (although they are known as such for entirely different reasons).

The audience, in one sense, wasn't what you might expect. True, most of the women bore more than a passing resemblance to Gillian Anderson, and yes, there was a higher than average probability of bumping into a man in a long grey overcoat who looked remarkably like David Duchovny but rather surprisingly they knew nothing whatsoever about the paranormal.

Now perhaps I shouldn't have been so surprised, after all, it is only a TV series.. But when the anorak-clad followers of this remarkably successful show devote so much of their time (and money - up to £100 or more for a single collectors card!) to it, I would have thought they may *at least* have misguidedly read the odd Charles Berlitz book here or the occasional Roswell book there. But no, they knew nothing! They looked confused as they gazed at the front cover of the December '96 issue of 'Naro Minde' - which sported the legendary picture of Major Jesse Marcel holding the remains of the Roswell Balloon, not to mention the controversial slogan on the cover of issue 6- 'sticking two fingers up to the ETH' - 'What's the ETH? they asked innocently. And so it's not surprising that we didn't sell many books, until the arrival of Jenny Randles that is, then we were deluged with eager autograph hunters.

On the first day, our services weren't called for until the afternoon. One of the organisers rushed out to a video store to purchase a copy of the 'Roswell Autopsy Video' which they intended to show to the assembled masses. Nick Pope, Mervyn Gale and I were ushered into the video room to watch it. After the video had been shown, we all agreed that it was a fake, so Mervyn and I opened up the debate to cover the whole of the Roswell legend. This is where Nick Pope and I part company in terms of opinion on the Roswell events (and just about everything else). Nick argued that Jesse Marcel was an expert witness, a pilot with 5 medals of honour and an exemplary service record - not to mention a Physics Degree. All these facts are disputed by research undertaken recently which has proven that Marcel's qualifications were no more than a fabrication. As to whether this confabulation was on Jesse's part or on the part of Roswell researchers we may never know. I was taken aback by a question from a girl in the front row (who had the appearance of a 13 year-old); she asked if UFOs weren't just another interpretation of a phenomenon that has been with us for many centuries i.e. faeries. This young lady had obviously done some serious reading into UFOs - unlike

Nick, I suspect!

The rest of the day was pretty uneventful, and so we looked forward to the dinner/disco to be held that evening. It was rather comical that Mervyn and I had to sit at the head of a table at this function as we were guests (albeit not very well known ones!). The best was, in typical fashion, yet to come.

As the ale flowed and the temperature hotted up, we were subjected to the hideous site of the aforementioned desk-jockey, namely Pope, gyrating about like a man with a ferret in his trousers. Even funnier still were his attempts to fight off one inebriated young woman, who had been sitting on our table and had obviously decided to win herself one of the male guests at the event (she had, a few moments earlier, dragged me onto the dancefloor). It was something of a relief that she had tried me before Pope! After she realised she wasn't going to win the affections of 'the real life Fox Muldar', she gave Mervyn a kiss and retired for the evening.

The humiliation of the previous evening was forgotten in the hungover atmosphere the following morning as Nick, Jenny, Mervyn and I climbed onto the stage for our paranormal question time. It nearly didn't happen at all, as Jerry 'Deep Throat' Hardin was signing autographs in an adjacent room; but there was a respectable 80 or so people in the audience who complained when the cancellation was announced, and so ahead it went.

Nick Pope looked distinctly nervous as Jenny, Mervyn and I outlined, at length, our opinions on the UFO phenomenon. Nick just said that he'd go for the short option - namely that he believes we have structured craft violating our airspace and they are manned by intelligent extraterrestrial beings. It wasn't going to be Nick's day. Jenny expertly led Nick up the garden path like we were in court. But Nick, like a broken record, just kept saying that in his time with the MoD, he knew of no other governmental departments that dealt with UFO reports made by the public. Jenny, never missing a marketing opportunity, quoted from her new book about the secret departments she has unearthed evidence of. Nick just flatly denied it.

Afterwards, Jenny gave an interesting lecture on the MiB phenomenon (see this issue). And that was it.

I found it amazing how little the fans of the X-Files actually knew about the paranormal. I had planned to do a survey at the event but because of monetary restrictions I was unable to get the questionnaires printed. It was something of a relief really that they knew so little. However, that does not mean to say that the X-Files doesn't have any effect on the public's perception of the paranormal. As one little girl said to me: "Mulder may be good looking but anyone who does what he does in real life is just really sad...."

Thanks to:

Lee Staniforth for donating a free stall at the convention

Dillions bookshop for tickets for Jenny's recent presentation there.

NARO MINDED

IN YOUR AREA

Check out some of the saner groups/magazines in the North West:-

Lancashire Aerial Phenomena Investigation Society (LAPIS), 293 Devonshire Road, Blackpool, FY2 0TW

'The New UFOlogist', 293 Devonshire Road, Blackpool, FY2 0TW

'ABDUCTION WATCH'
c/o Kevin McClure, 3 Claremont Grove, Leeds, LS3 1AX

Merseyside Anomalies Research Association (MARA)
52 Hawthorne Avenue, Halewood, Merseyside, L26 9XP
Telephone: 0151 486 6087

THE ARMCHAIR UFOLOGIST
c/o Andy Roberts, 84 Elland Rd, Brighouse, West Yorks, HD6 2QR

Lancashire UFO Society, PO BOX 73, Lancaster,LA1 1GZ (also produce an interesting journal entitled 'The Grey Area')

If you are currently experiencing any form of paranormal activity, NARO would like to here from you.
Please contact your local investigator:

Warrington	Peter Hough	01942 604265
Tameside & East M/cr	Andy Blunn	0976 319971
Stockport	Mervyn Gale	0161 428 5899
Merseyside	Mark Glover	0151 476 0356
North Manchester	Vic Sleigh	0161 280 1606
South Manchester	Tony Cranstoun	0161 436 3091
Leeds	Annette Snow	0113 286 5823
Buxton & Peak District	Jenny Randles	01298 814473

THE MEN FROM THE MINISTRY

In the wake of colleague Peter Hough's less than ecstatic comments on her timely MIB book, Jenny Randles gets the knives out....

It was obviously a dastardly plot to get me to contribute something to *NARO Minded*.I have been promising (and not delivering) for ages. So - the grand plan no doubt went - fill the August 1997 issue with scurrilous attacks by Peter Hough and Alicia Leigh on my masterpiece '*MIB:Investigating the truth behind the Men in Black*' and how could I resist? How well you know me!

Both pieces argued that in my book I do not go far enough. I discuss the claims of UFO witnesses to be visited by strangers who caution them into silence and may even seek to confiscate physical evidence. I find them real (rather than Hollywood fantasy). Not only that, but suspect that in many cases they are very terrestrial as opposed to extra-terrestrial (or ultra-terrestrial or whatever universe you think these UFO entities come from).

Of course, I am not unmindful of the argument that something stranger may be going on. It was perhaps a wee bit unfair not to make it clear to your readers that throughout the book I emphasise that there are two ways to interpret the data - i.e. government intelligence agents playing games or a morphic 'entity' that is part of the phenomenon itself. I hardly ignore the latter possibility. I have a chapter completely devoted to it (citing cases where miraculous events are reported which the dear old MoD don't normally teach their civil servants). I have a second chapter reviewing the historical evidence for possible MIB in folklore and modern mythology pre-dating the UFO mystery. Yet again these cases clearly fly in the face of any attempt to pin the solution on government agents. Balanced against these two chapters is just one (admittedly a longish one) that debates the government agency theory. Given the rest of the book comprises case histories that can be interpreted any way you choose my totting up of the pages devoted to both these options comes to a fairly equal pegging by my calculation.

It is true that I do not discuss Peter's fascinating BSWs (Bogus Social Workers). Had Peter co-authored the book (as he was invited to do) no doubt this element would have been included. I must say that it is an interesting phenomenon; although I am not convinced of its direct relevance to MIB cases. However, it is not an area in which I have first hand experience and with this book I was determined to include first hand data wherever possible. I made very clear in conclusion of my text that I saw this as an opening up of the debate on a topic UFOlogists have tended to run away from. It was not intended as the ultimate declaration of what MIB might be.

That said, I am surprised that what to me is the fundamental 'discovery' in the book was not mentioned. The evidence unravelling as it did certainly strengthens my conviction that many examples of MIB are the result of a government agency. This - as suspected - is a finding that I believe we must now reach in some - perhaps most - and maybe all - MIB cases.

The discovery comes in the form of three things. There is evidence via the Public Record Office Files at Kew, and which I spent much time perusing I had contacts and confidants within the MoD itself who shared their knowledge of the power structure. And I procured 'covert' documents which prove that the MoD have lied to the British public.

When you put all of this evidence together there seems to be an overwhelming case made out that Nick Pope's beloved Air Staff 2A is a smokescreen. It exists to distract the attention of the populace and make them think that it has UFOs under control. The real truth - as the evidence unequivocally shows - is that two deeper covert agencies have been investigating UFOs all along. These are DSTI (Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence) and DI 55 (a defence intelligence unit whose agents specialise in data retrieval from witnesses). The very fact that these organisations hold the real power base in so far as MoD UFO study is concerned supports the idea of MIB being agents from such a source.

More significant still, as the book discusses, the MoD denial of these agencies (proven a lie in documents I print) and their further denial to have ever sent anyone to visit a witness and interrogate them are shot to pieces by 1997 documents procured from the Public Record Office. These reveal an incident where the defence intelligence unit visited (and silenced) a police witness in Wilmslow in 1966 and only the intervention of his Deputy Chief Constable eventually allowed the truth to emerge. If it had been up to the MoD they would've frightened the witness into silence (maybe forever) by this visit as I am certain they have done in so many other instances. That they also took away physical evidence from the site (by the town centre cinema) is a further significant clue. This evidence was probably spurious, not significant in its own right, but that is not the point. The net result of all this documentation is to establish once and for all that the MoD have lied about the existence of higher level agencies studying UFOs and, regardless of repeated denials, *have* visited witnesses, *warned* them into silence and *confiscated* evidence.

I submit that this is pretty much game, set and match that at least some of the MIB stories reported in the book must have followed a pretty similar course of events to the case in Wilmslow. Ergo - we have little choice but to accept that there are real MIB and they come from a covert government agency. I would have thought that the UFO community was more alert to the significance of this discovery.

Of course, you can, if you wish, choose to assume that there are *other* MIB with a more exotic interpretation - and there may well be. This is no different from saying (as I do) that many UFOs are natural physical phenomena on the fringe of scientific awareness or novel technology being tested by our own government effectively disguised as UFOs. Yet that *in addition* there may also be a real alien intelligence out there too. The UAP and secret craft you can probably prove with hard evidence. The 'alien' theory - as UFOlogists know only too well - becomes a matter of subjective judgement of cases that do not quite fit the customary pattern. I think exactly this applies to the MIB phenomenon and what I was doing was publishing the evidence that I believe demonstrates that covert government agents are visiting witnesses. this is something we can establish for certain and then discuss the consequences. Who can hope to ever prove that there are any shape changing aliens who masquerade as social workers?

Whether you think that any other kind of MIB exists, or not, I feel that we have to debate this evidence for the terrestrial visitors because it is on the table in black and white terms you simply cannot argue against. I had hoped my book might cause us all to ponder the implication of this revelation and it is disappointing to see this side of things swept away as almost being irrelevant in comparison with a few (admittedly weird) stories.

I am certain that it is very relevant that we have now proven beyond doubt that there is an extensive covert agency involvement in UFOs. It points towards the motives for MoD interest in the subject. We see witnesses associated with military weapons technology, or who accidentally intrude into areas where things were going on the MoD did not want them to know about. It might almost be as if the UFO was fairly incidental to the witness being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

To me it is the recognition of factors such as this that make me sense that 'MIB' opens up an intriguing can of worms. I would just ask more of you to leave aside your beliefs that there are metamorphic monsters from another reality who are sometimes masquerading as MIB (as there may - or may not - be). Instead take a time out to ponder the few things that the book makes abundantly clear we can now state with virtual assurance. These involve the undeniably shady activities of covert MoD agencies and the way they are using the UFO mystery for their own ends.

Like the UFO mystery itself, it would appear that there isn't a unique solution to the MiB phenomenon either. If any readers have an opinion on the MiB phenomenon then please write in to our letters page. [AB]

Going off At Tangents

Andy Blunn asks if those pesky 'flying triangles' are really 'Our Secret Technology' or are they simply another variant on the same old theme....

As a student at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST), I am often ridiculed by my colleagues for my interest in the paranormal - particularly the UFO Phenomenon. Like most uninformed people, they make the automatic assumption that UFO = alien spaceship and so they take the mick. But hey, I'm used to it; and as Tim Grundy remarked to me on Radio 5 Live's 'After Hours' program - they're all trekkers down at UMIST anyway.

So as you can imagine, it is not often that any aspect of my studies crosses over with my 'other interest' - until now.

In issue 5 of Naro Minded, I made some off-the-cuff remarks about research done by Tim Matthews into the 'Flying Triangle' reports.^[1] Tim was non-too-pleased with my comments, and broke his self-imposed rule of sticking to UFO research rather than criticising the work of others. He accused me of never having read anything on Stealth Technology. He even moved that my last name should be Blunder (as opposed to Blunn - nice one Tim, never heard that one before).^[2] But it's a free country and we all have an opinion on this fascinating subject of ours - so no hard feelings.

As a naive adolescent, weaned on 'Chariots of the Gods' and other such tomes, I speculated on what might power an alien spaceship traversing our galaxy. Ion drives, anti-gravity devices, even 'Star Trek' style 'warp drives': I contemplated them all. And being a bit of an aviation buff cum science anorak, I thought that one day I may end up designing such machines. And so I studied hard and eventually chose to study Aerospace Engineering at degree level - becoming a student of the Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) in the process.

So ignorant of technological developments I ain't.

theory

To understand the aerodynamics behind it all doesn't take a great deal of thought. The feature of the 'flying triangle' that is most commonly publicised is the 'waverider' feature. If you were to take an average vehicle that flies above mach 5 (say, the Space Shuttle), you would notice that it has a rounded nose and wing-edges. The reason for this is that air flowing past the vehicle at that speed gives up it's kinetic energy as heat (which is why the space shuttle heats up on re-entry to the earth's atmosphere). When the vehicle is travelling faster than the speed of sound (i.e in excess of mach 1) it generates shockwaves which envelope the vehicle when travelling at high mach numbers. The shockwaves cannot bend themselves around the rounded noses and wing-edges and so they separate from the vehicle's skin; this means there is a gap between the rounded edges and the surface of the shock. Because of this, about a quarter of the lift potential is wasted - as a fraction of the airflow on the underside of the vehicle leaks out through the gap.

Waveriders are different. They have sharp noses and wing-edges which the shockwave attaches to (rather than separates from) and so any air that previously would have escaped is trapped between the shock and the fuselage and can only escape from the rear of the vehicle. (The second law of thermodynamics prevents air travelling back through the shock the way it came in.) This, in short, means that all the lift is preserved allowing the waverider to re-enter at higher altitudes where the air density is lower which in turn means reduced heating rates.

The concept itself is not new- evolving simultaneously in Britain and the USSR. The only vehicle to be built so far was the ill-fated American XB-70 Mach 3 'Valkyrie' in the early 60's. There are two generic vehicle shapes associated with the waverider. One is the triangular delta wing negative dihedral and the other is the gothic arch planform of a steam iron with an inverted 'W' cross-section.^[3]

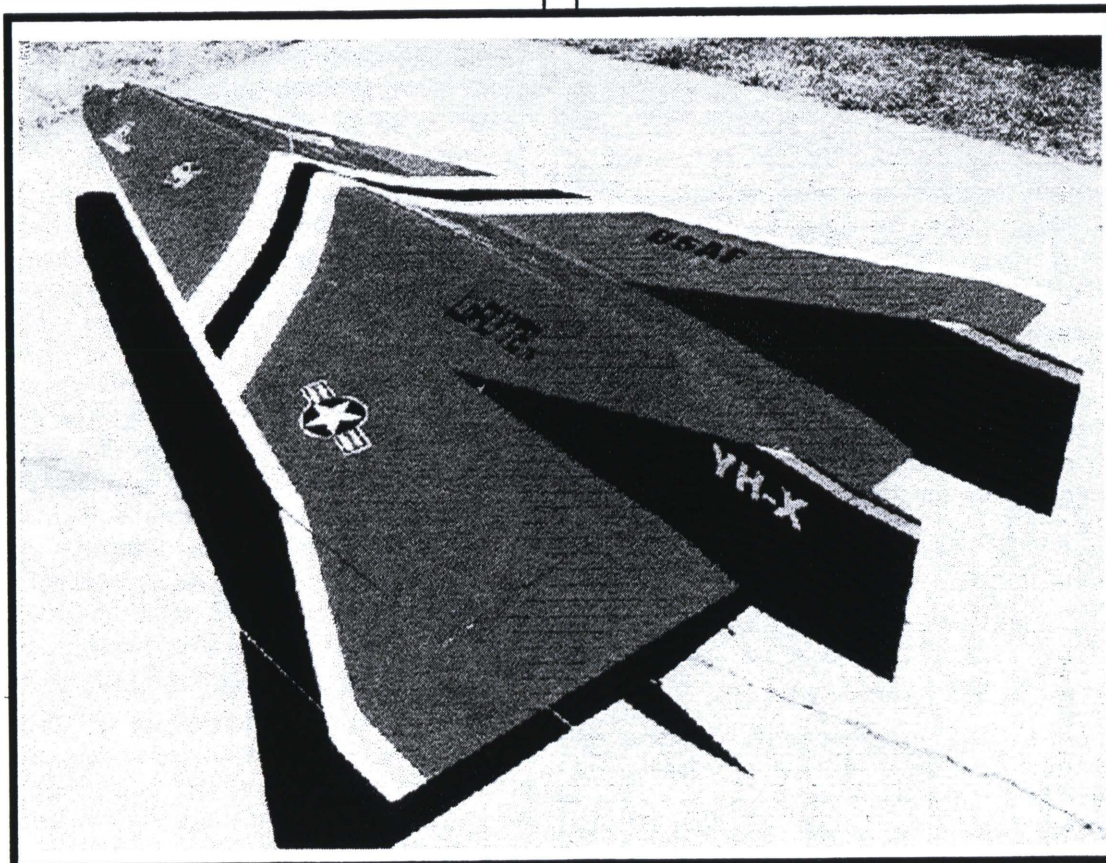
LoFlyte

We must now look at the second term commonly applied to the 'flying triangles' which is LoFlyte. Not actually a term as such, but the name given to a joint NASA /Accurate Automation Corporation (AAC) project comprising of a sub-scale, low

respond to the pilots controls even if the aircraft's body was damaged. This meant that the system would have to compensate for any damaged control surface such as an aileron. Such a control surface would also be necessary to make the required adjustments at such high speeds.

real science

So we have established what all the fuss is about in terms of the technology behind the triangles, or have we? Well, not quite. Many triangle reports do not consist of a vehicle travelling at the high velocities associated with the 'waverider'. In fact, a great number of such reports are of a hovering triangular craft. We are now entering the realms of



speed prototype of a mach 5 aircraft.

LoFlyte's aim is to show that such an aircraft can have good control characteristics across its entire speed range. To this end, the control system is based on neural networks. These date back to the 1950s when the idea came about of making it possible for an aircraft to

the 'anti-gravity' engine or pulsed - microwave engine. This is where real life research starts to get slightly hazy. In my original commentary on Tim's article I questioned the statement that the triangles use some sort of 'electromagnetic photonic forcefield' which 'cocoon' the [helicopter - in the case

of the article] craft enabling it to travel without the usual gravitational and inertial restrictions. The theory behind this isn't very clear and comes from the rather blinkered columns of 'Skywatch International'. There is, occasionally, mention given to this idea. The 'discovery' made by some Scandinavian Physicists which was subsequently withdrawn is an example of this.^[4]

It is also stated that the triangles are being tested in secret by their operators. Why? The NASA/AAC LoFlyte Project is certainly not secret; indeed one can view images of it landing on one of its test flights by accessing their web site.^[5] Data regarding the performance of the craft is also available. I am at a loss to explain why BAE or anyone else for that matter would want to test fly their aircraft over densely populated areas if they are going to such lengths to cover-up their operations. Is it reasonable that a company like BAE would spend millions of pounds on a super-secret facility to hide its' latest project, and then fly it down 'Main Street' for everyone to admire?

parallels

Of course, one cannot ignore the fact that the UFO phenomenon appears to change with each change in our technology - apparently always one step ahead of what we currently have. This idea goes hand in hand with the argument that 'abductions' are the same as those that have taken place over the centuries, but they are interpreted in the context of the era of technological development the per- cipient is living in.

The Belgian triangle wave of 1989 is currently the holder of the auspicious title of the most famous flying triangle case. It apparently has everything: radar lock-ons, thousands of witnesses and photographic evidence.

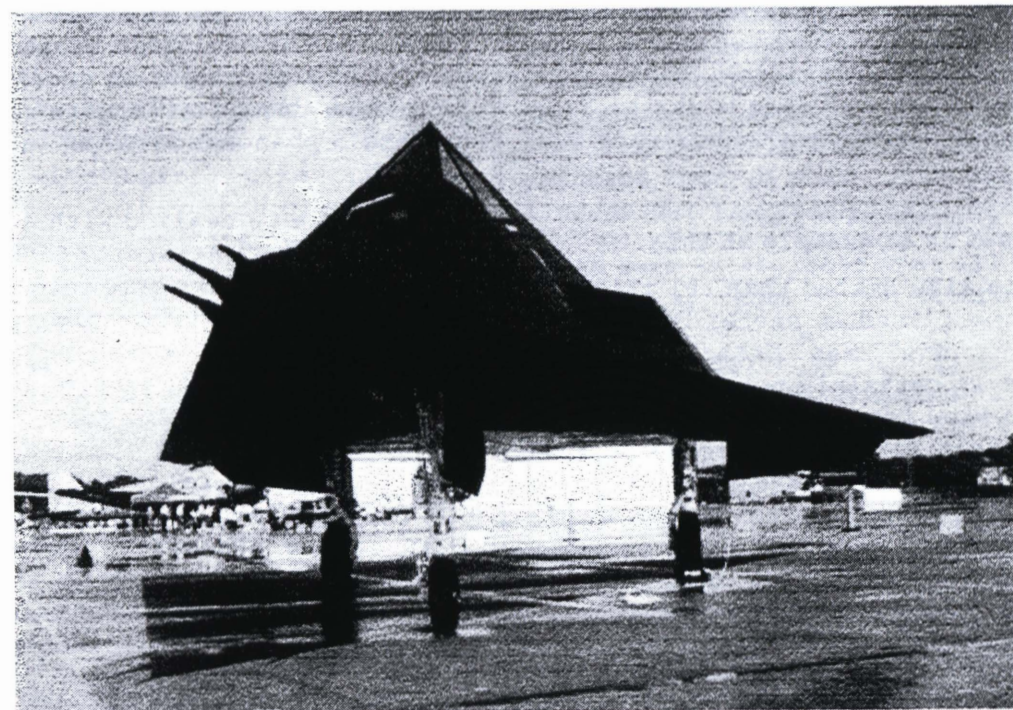
Sceptical of the argument that these sightings were of an alien spaceship, non-ETHers have argued that what was actually seen was the aforementioned 'LoFlyte' aircraft - an argument which has been accepted by the Belgian government as a violation of their airspace.^[6] Unfortunately the manufacturers of LoFlyte insist it has never left the U.S.

There is a superb analysis of the case in a superb article in 'The New Ufologist'. Wim Van Utrecht - a respected researcher who heads the Caelestia Project - analyses the Belgian wave in great depth and concludes that it was more of a sociological phenomenon than a military one.^[7]

So are we dealing with a new super secret military aircraft? Since the triangle mystery first came into its own, we have seen a number of people come forward claiming to have worked on the craft. This is vaguely reminiscent of the 'engineers' who have come forward to claim they have worked on 'back-engineered' technology from recovered alien spacecraft. As usual, the people wish to remain in the shadows - unable to come forward in fear of losing their jobs. This is a recurring theme in conspiracy theory, one which fits neatly into the whole cover-up gravy-train. In fact the idea that these particular UFOs are terrestrial in origin is, in my opinion, just as narrowminded as the idea they are from an alien civilisation. What we have, in effect, is yet another set of data which fits some - but not all - of the facts.

go stealthily

And so we come, reluctantly, to the F117-A 'Nighthawk', better known as the elusive 'Stealth Fighter'. An unremarkable aircraft really; with a subsonic top speed and an unfortunate capacity to be 'visible' during rainfall, no other aircraft has captured the imagination and attention of the general public. Its very appearance is 'spaceship'-like. With its angular, radar confusing surfaces - it might well be from another planet. (Some researchers have argued that this is the result of 'back engineered technology: obviously they have little confidence in the human race's ability to develop. How frustrating it is to hear people state that computer technology couldn't have come so far in such a short period of time: these people obviously know nothing about electronic engineering, miniturisation of componentry, the history of the development of computers etc...etc...cultural masochism again!) However I digress.



new, sportier model

It is my opinion that some sightings of flying triangles may well be secret aircraft - and there is certainly more evidence for this thanks to the research of people like Tim Matthews. But if the UFO enigma obeys its own outlandish 'laws', then I'm sure that in, say, 20 years, the 'triangles' will be replaced with a more 'up-to-date' model.

References and Recommended Reading:

1. Stealth, Lies and Videotape, Tim Matthews, January 1997.
2. The Grey Area, Issue 1 Volume 1, Lancashire UFO Society.
3. The Scottish Rocket Programme@ <http://www.nettek.co.uk/orgs/staar>
4. See also 'Electrogravitic Systems', Gravity Research Group, Aviation Studies International, London - a study done for the USAF.
5. 'Teaching a Computer How To Fly', <http://www.accurate-auto...avionics/avionicsmag.html>
6. 'The Curtain Comes Down in Belgium', 'UFO Magazine', September/October 1997
7. 'The Belgian Wave' by Wim Van Utrecht, 'The New Ufologist', Issue 6 1997

It's sharp outline and triangular shape make this iconic craft a candidate for an explanation to some triangular UFO sightings. But is it more likely that people have this picture so engrained on their minds that it has become a cultural archetype?



GHOST FRAME

Mervyn Gale asks whether or not we would recognise a genuine paranormal photograph if we saw one...

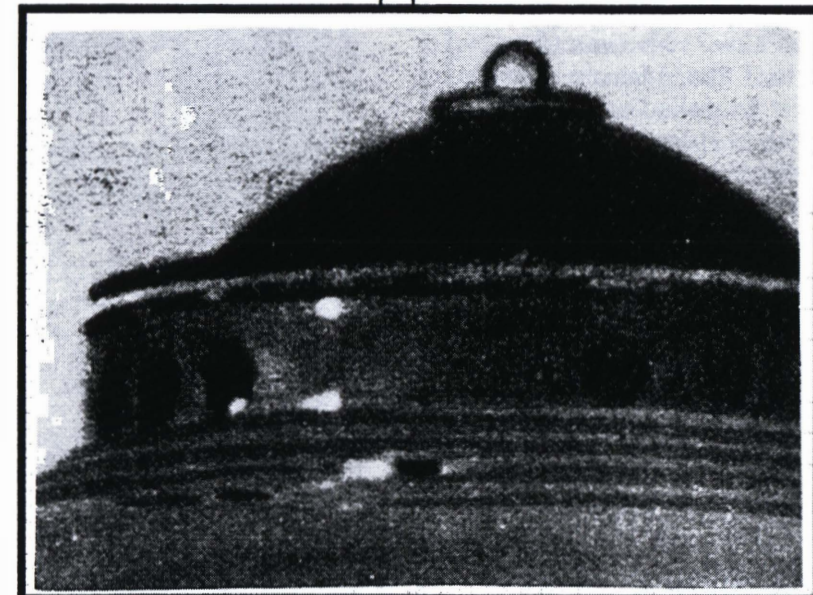
Towards the end of 'The Omen', ace investigative photographer David Warner is developing one of his prints. To his consternation, a shadowy blemish appears on the developed image; he shows it to anguished US Ambassador to the Court of St. James Gregory Peck, who evidently shares his horror. Why? The blemish looks like a slender lance, poised menacingly near his shoulders on the print - and we, the audience, fear for the worst. The lank-haired Mr. Warner has already succeeded in demonstrating an evidential link between similar photos of his, and the violent (and unnatural) demises of the said photo's subjects. He has, to all intents and purposes, managed to photograph a curse

in action - the malediction in question being the work of the (very juvenile) Satan - avarar Damien. Consequently, we are hardly shocked when the intrepid journo buys the farm; but we are certainly entertained by his nimbly-staged on-screen decapitation. These photographs are proof positive of malign supernatural intervention in the overblown vision of 'The Omen' - but to the rest of us they would be merely curious, and forgotten ten minutes after seeing them. Surely we expect a more grandiose visual rhetoric from our

'unexplained' photos in the age of Computer Generated Imagery and 'Photoshop' hoaxed UFOs-in-hangars. But never mind: the context is everything.

After all, what *would* a diabolical curse look like on film? Would blurred lines bisecting bodies be enough for us to react by shaving off our adopted ankle biter's head, only to find those three sixes hiding underneath? Probably not. Even blow-ups and computer enhance-

ments would make no difference (even if they established the prima facie paranormality of the pic.) Why? *Because we would have already condemned it out of hand, on purely aesthetic grounds.*



Behind this reaction would be a lurking disappointment; we would, perhaps, expect more in the way of Gothic splendour from the Lord of the Flies himself than a grey smudge. The image would 'look' wrong in some fundamental, perhaps elusive, fashion...

And so it is with 'real' paranormal images - or at least those that purport to be. How many times do we look at a photo, and instantly label it as a phoney merely because we react instinctively? Take George Adamski's legendary Venusian Saucer - snaps (see example above).

In her recent 'Fortean Times' article, Janet Bord says "the craft are so detailed the are highly unlikely to be genuine. They look dated now". The first part of this neatly encapsulates the classic 'catch 22' of UFO pictures: if it's detailed it's a fake, but if it's blurred....well, it's *blurred* so you can't identify it anyway! This presupposes that UFOs cannot register clearly on film in ideal circumstances - but if not, why not? The second statement is interesting, because it betrays a pretty sophisticated acknowledgement that UFOs 'move with the times', and reflect the culture they are perceived in. You can bet you last Andromedan Credit Mint the 'triangles' will look dated in forty years too. Ironically, the '50s port-holed, robust-looking craft of Adamski can therefore (presumably) be used to *bolster* the truth of his account by a determined advocate. (After all, we'd be pretty excited by clear, nuts-and-bolts images of 'airships' or 'ghost rockets' wouldn't we?) No: even if we demonstrated that the Adamski snaps were impossible to fake - which we can't - we'd still carp on about them 'not looking right'. (Because 'real' spacecraft would be sleeker, and have no visible seams or knobby bits on top).

It may be an odd thing to say, but even that revolting ectoplasm has its own aesthetic: that is to say, some photos of the stuff 'look right' and some 'look wrong'. We can be more specific than this: the ones that 'look wrong', generally speaking, do so because they are plainly something other than a paranormal emanation - usually muslin, string, rubber gloves, saliva, or some unappetizing combination thereof. The notorious Helen Duncan pictures are a case in point - nothing could actually *look* more fraudulent than these twisted ropes and crudely fashioned papier-maché heads and limbs*.

Unfortunately, the same could be said of the celebrated teleplasmic 'rods' and assorted protrusions photographed around the mouth and genitals of the young Belfast medium Kathleen Goligher in the early 1920s by Dr. W.J.Crawford.

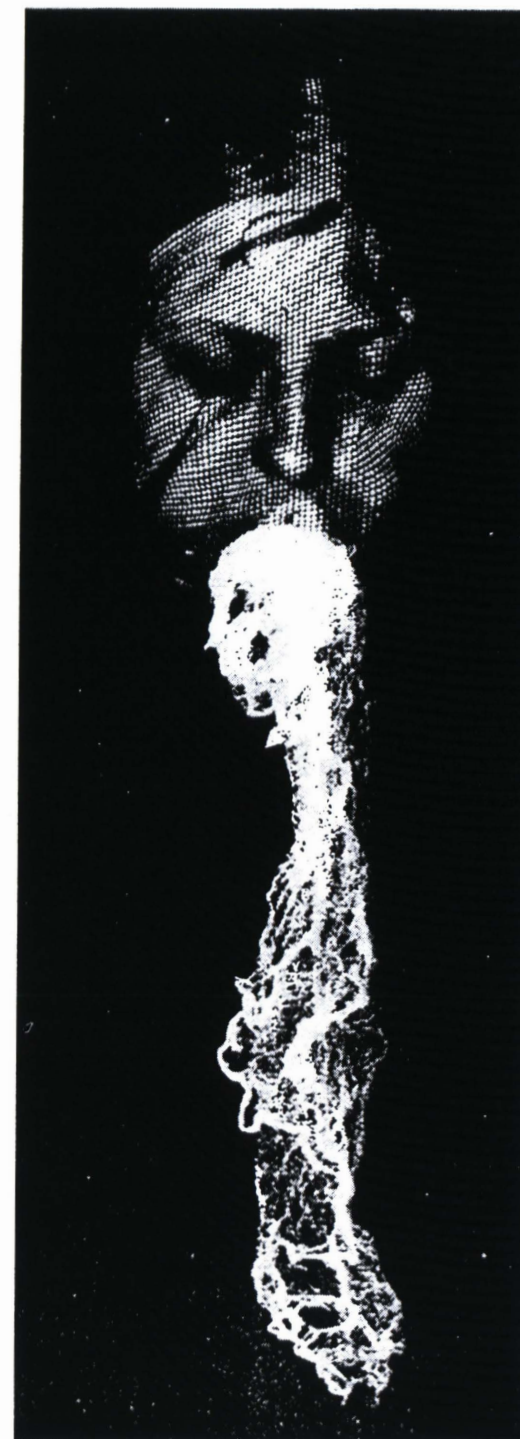
Here however, we have run immediately into difficulties, for most authorities agree that these séances were conducted under stringent



conditions, involving intimate bodily examinations and close monitoring of the subject. And yet, to our jaded 1990s eyes, these photos seem to show something altogether too coarse and gross to fit our preconceptions. The peculiar nasal and oral adornments visible in this picture of Nottingham Miner Jack Webber in the 1930s frankly resemble plasticine - but when one reads his glowing contemporary testimonials, the laughter is arrested in the throat. After all, why *shouldn't* ectoplasm remind you of plasticine - or vice-versa - since they have so much in common? [plate 2 & 3]

To conclude: my favourite picture of this

*Although even Duncan has her partisans, who see her 1944 trial as a kind of martyrdom.



controversial paranormal play-dough is reproduced above. Personally, I think it's a cracker. There is a fine mesh over the head of the medium - Stanislaw P., a young Polish medium studied by Schrenck Von Notzing - apparently precluding the possibility of regurgitating prepared substances. The ectoplasm itself has a delicate, gossamer quality - diaphanous but fiery. Its individual filaments seem

to be luminous. Cumulatively, these qualities are very impressive. The dyed-in-the-wool sceptic would have to postulate a pretty sophisticated hoax, involving experimenter, medium, witnesses, and photographer. (He or she would also have to explain, it seems to me, the presence of time travelling fibre optics coming out of a 1913 tummy!)

It looks mysterious. More importantly, it doesn't inspire derision in the viewer. However, certain other pictures taken under similar circumstances seem to show stiff, two-dimensional materialised 'faces', sometimes embedded in amorphous glowing clouds pouring from the nostrils of 1930s Canadian medium. And here I find myself on the horns of a dilemma. The 'faces', in isolation, look phoney. But when, they appear to be peeping from bubble-like nodules around an inch in diameter, which are themselves encrusted on a luminous nasal gas pocket below the proboscis of an entranced Winnipeg housewife, the affect is different. The image looks like a photograph by surrealist Man Ray, or Max Ernst: funny and disconcerting. This is especially true when one recognises the aforementioned snot-faces as belonging to none other than Arthur Conan Doyle - himself, of course, the greatest celebrity convert to spiritualism. The image has become, somehow, greater than the sum of its parts. The artificiality of the 'faces', through an unexpected synergy, becomes a strength and not a flaw. Unexpectedly, my own particular prejudices have been pandered to. I like 'paranormal' pictures to be both capable of evoking mystery, and preposterous enough to offend the dicta of common sense. Hence, I would love the pictures to be 'real', as indeed they may be.

None of this, of course, means that 'real' ectoplasm, should it exist, doesn't actually look like rubber gloves or yesterdays half digested macaroni cheese - after all, others have different tastes. And I would be obliged to chasten my self with the thought that (for example) Marthe Beraud, who produced similar 'face studded' images was sometimes accused of fraud - while plasticine-dangler Jack Webber never has been. A final observation: could it be that some of these images are, in fact, *psychic collaborations*? Perhaps genuine paranormal manifestations are being caught on film, but their

actual *reproduction* is being affected by some subtle, unconscious telekenetic effect at the development stage. This process would lead to images 'moulded' in accord with the strongly held views of the witnesses, insofar as these views affect the 'proper' appearance of the things they are watching? Answers on a postcard, to the usual address.



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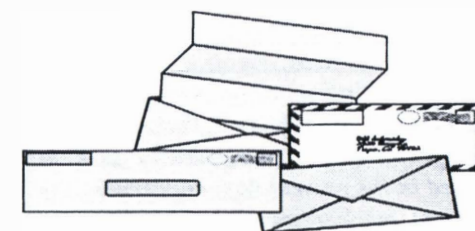
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THE UFOLOGIST, by Andy & Mervyn



NARO MINDED MAIL

Please send your comments and criticisms to:

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or email: andrew.p.blunn@stud.umist.ac.uk

Sir,

The existence of the kinds of anomalous phenomena Anthony Obanye alludes to (NM#4) has profound implications for our understanding of the nature of, and relationship between, consciousness and what we call the external world. It suggests that our current scientific model of the universe - the Newtonian-Cartesian paradigm, in which most scientific disciplines are still grounded (though not quantum physics, of course) is wrong. Those who refuse to even consider the possibility that such phenomena might exist - and sadly that includes probably the majority of orthodox scientists - are still clinging to a paradigm which discoveries in physics from the turn of the century have shown to be outmoded.

Obanye (rightly, I think) rejects scientific materialism which holds that matter is fundamental and consciousness a mere epiphenomenon, or bi-product. However, in still clinging to dualism (which I take to be Cartesian dualism) he is embracing a paradigm which is not only outmoded but which cannot accommodate the kind of anomalous phenomena he is seeking to explain. What is needed is nothing less than a new way of looking at the world in which consciousness, not matter, (and not both) is fundamental.

Why do I say 'looking at the world' rather than 'formulating a new theory'? Because, as Neils Bohr, founder father of quantum physics, pointed out, that is all we can ultimately do. Obanye quotes Bohr as saying that the purpose of science '...is not to disclose the real essence of phenomena but only to track down....relationships between multifold aspects of our experience'. Let me put this another way: scientific theories (of gravity, electromagnetism or whatever) are no longer to be considered as being anything other than working models - mental constructs that are useful in predicting events, but which do not correspond to anything real. Gary Zukov made the same point in *The Dancing Wu-Li Masters*: 'Most people think physicists are explaining the world: they are only dancing with it.'

Joseph Dormer

Anthony Obanye replies:

To begin with, in my article, I defined myself as someone who subscribes to both panpsychism and to dualism. Panpsychism is that philosophy which regards consciousness as an absolutely fundamental property of the universe, and one which is invariably associated with all aspects of matter. It is a reasonable alternative, in my view, to the irrationality of seeing consciousness (a strictly non-physical entity) as suddenly appearing at a given level of neurological complexity in organisms designated as mammalian. As a 'panpsychist' then, I would be tempted to say that the whole "material" universe is permeated by consciousness of one form or another.

However, I also believe that dualism is a fully valid way of looking at the universe. I particularly favour Henry Stapp's portrayal of Heisenberg's version of quantum theory (see "Mind, Matter, and Quantum Mechanics" by Henry P. Stapp; Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1993) where reality is divided into matter (the "objective tendency" for an event to become actual) and mind (the Heisenberg event which selects and actualises a large-scale pattern of activity in some large physical system like the brain). The irony is that this physical system, although material, does not consist of tangible "stuff", according to this theory, but of the "objective tendencies" for the subsequent actual event - the famous "collapse of the wave function".

Thus, for one to believe that dualism is true doesn't automatically mean that one subscribes necessarily to Cartesian dualism. However, I am not convinced, as you are, that Cartesian dualism is now obsolete. In many ways its philosophy represents, in exaggerated fashion perhaps, the ongoing debate (which is far from being resolved in the present day) concerning the logically unbridgeable gap between the brain as a physical mechanism and the associated consciousness which cannot be located in space and is therefore an intrinsically non-physical entity. Cartesian dualism is surely the honest admission (which is still relevant today in the guise of the "hard problem" in consciousness research), that there is no logical way of deriving the world of consciousness from that of objective physical matter. Heisenberg's model of reality incorporates both mind and matter in a beautifully cooperative partnership. But it is still only one model, and many great intellects would probably dispute it.

You may wonder why I feel it necessary to be a "disciple" of both dualism and panpsychism. Generally I like the idea of truth by consensus. I am convinced that so many clever minds arguing from apparently mutually exclusive viewpoints are seeing different sides of a greater truth. Further more, it makes intuitive sense to me that the 'real' universe out there is too large to be confined by any one narrow human view. Instead, it (i.e. the 'real' universe) demands that we combine schools of thought depending on the particular aspect of reality we are concerned with. I (and I am being self-indulgently speculative here) am of the suspicion that the universe we inhabit, results from the interaction of numerous systems of consciousness. Thus dualism is, for me, a simple representation of numerous possible multiplisms that might occur as a result of the intermingling of such systems.

Finally, some form of dualism has to be high up on the list of candidates as a logical explanation for anomalous phenomena such as out-of-body experiences and near-death experiences. Such an explanation may strike those who consider themselves to be rational (ha! ha!) thinkers as being too obvious, simple or childish ("a ghost in the machine?!") an explanation. However, such an explanation is more rational or pragmatic to my mind than simply dismissing such experiences as hallucinations when the very nature of conscious experience is itself an unknown.

Job Applicant writes . . .

Dear NARO,

I am quite interested in the research of the presence of extraterrestrial beings. I have been interested in this subject for quite some time now and have done extensive reading on it. I am wondering if you would be able to recommend the type of educational background one might need to be involved in a type of research team. Also if you would be able to name a few job titles and a brief explanation of what each career entails it would be greatly appreciated. Also could you tell me if there are many career opportunities in the field of ufology.

Thank you

Dana Hatcher, PO BOX 2490, Manuels, NF A1W 1C5 (originally via email)

We here at NARO Towers have heard of local groups with grandiose, official sounding names receiving letters from people who think these groups actually employ staff - presumably to work as lab technicians, or perhaps nurses in their 'clinics' - no names, no pack drill. [eds]

A Fan writes . . .

Dear NARO,

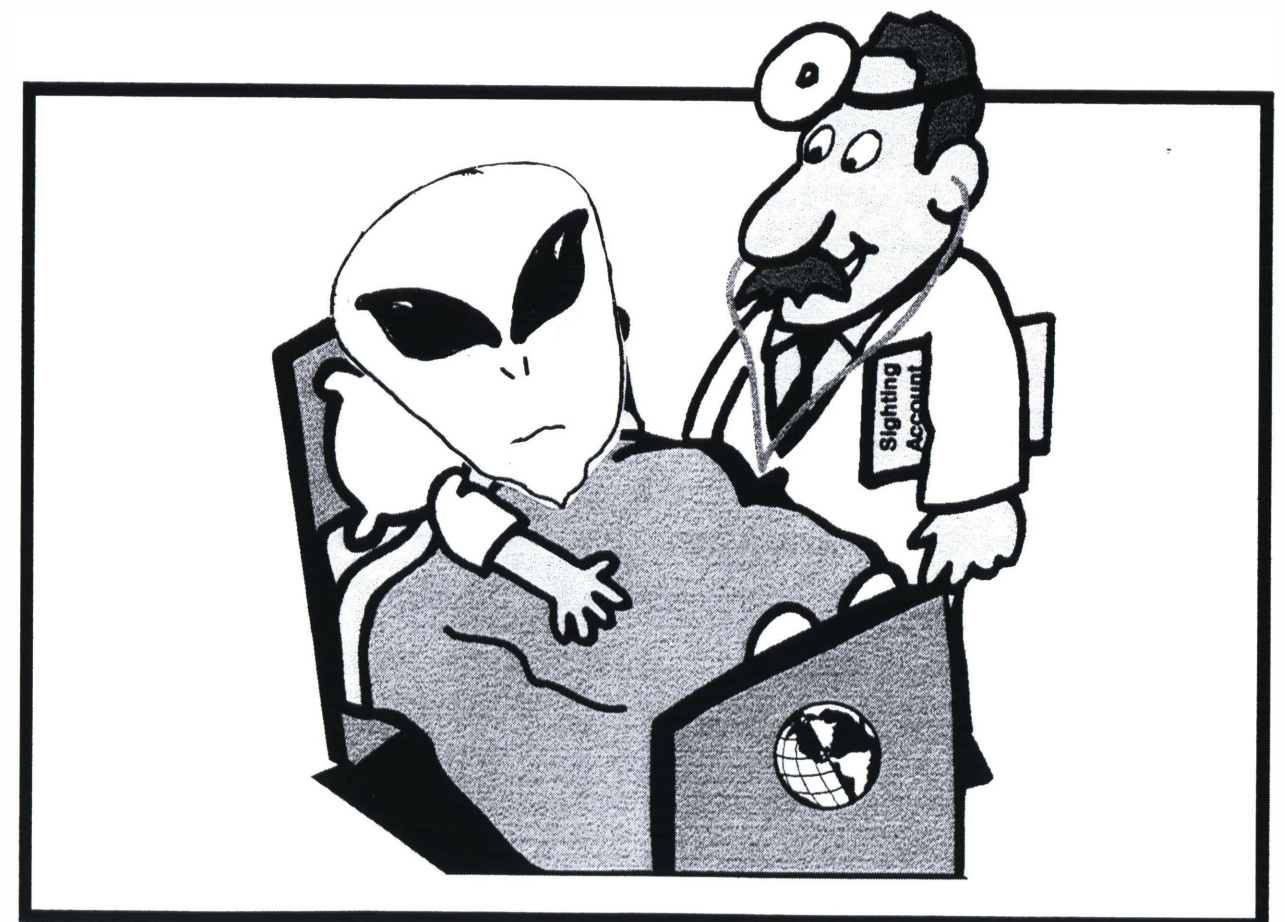
Jenny [Randles] has recommended your magazine. . . . Apart from NUN (Northern UFO News) I don't get to keep in touch much here at the back of beyond, except talking to Jenny on the phone. I get 'Sightings' mag by post, but apart from Jenny's sane columns, it's pretty weird. I wond

er why Ufology attracts so many nutters? I hope NARO is not infested with them. When I was in the old MUFORA it used to be plagued with committed EThers. My own view is that virtually everything can be explained by natural phenomena, strange aircraft, the quirks of the human brain or just plain old wishful thinking. But this does not make the subject any less interesting. Looking forward to your mag.

Yours...

Roy Sandbach.

Well, NARO says: Live and Let Live. If someone wants to believe that little space aliens keep buzzing around our airspace, and telling us that nuclear weapons are dangerous, then that's their business. There's too much bickering in ufology. [eds]



I don't know who told you you could get cow's anuses on prescription.....

BOOK REVIEW

'Aliens: Encounters with the Unexplained', by Marcus Day
1997 £12.99, Reviewed by **Andy Blunn**.

This book embodies everything that is wrong with modern ufology. Like much of the other pap that has been released this year, this book is no exception.

In the introduction, author Marcus Day suggests that "...perhaps it's time to stop arguing about alien visitors and start listening to them..." Well we would Marcus - if only there was a single shred of physical evidence to support the idea that we have ever been visited by one single extraterrestrial being.

Every myth that has ever been woven into ufology is covered inside. Day argues that there is "...a plausible argument that the object which guided the three wise men to Jesus was in fact a UFO, under the guidance and control of an intelligent race of aliens. *The only other explanation is the traditional Christian one, that it was a miracle from god.*" [emphasis added] So in true ufological style, Day assures us that even if this remarkable hypothesis is incorrect - there is an equally unsubstantiated one to replace it.

To give Day some credit, he does make references to alternative, prosaic explanations. But considerable emphasis is put on the more 'otherworldly' solutions.

But by far the biggest blunder is Day's confusion over the identity of the policeman involved in the Ilkley Moor entity and abduction case. The name of the witness is given here as Alan Godfrey! I doubt he'll be too chuffed about that!

In the final chapter Day asks the reader: "Have you been abducted?" Apparently, if you have experienced the following then you have probably been probed by the 'greys'.

- sighting a ufo
- intense light
- crackling noises
- out-of-body experience
- night seizures and paralysis

In my opinion, this kind of questionnaire serves no useful purpose whatsoever and only serves to increase the paranoia and fear generated by abduction reports

If you want a book with a fair and unbiased opinion of the UFO phenomenon, Peter Brookesmith's 'The Complete Sightings Catalogue' springs to mind or perhaps the 'Fortean Times: 50 years of UFOs'.

As we go to print, I note that this book is now available in remainder shops for about two quid.



Conference Review MIB DAY, GATLEY CINEMA by **Andy Blunn**

Sunday, August 3rd saw yet another event held at Gatley Cinema. It was a follow up to the poorly attended 'Golden Saucer Awards' which was scheduled for a few weeks before. Speakers included Pauline Delcour-Minn, Tim Matthews, Jenny Randles and Eric Morris. At the last minute, thanks to the diplomacy of Rory, we managed to get a stall at the event.

Although there were less people than last years 'Independence Day' event, a respectable 70 or so people shuffled into the lobby on that sunny Sunday morning. Rod Howarth, a familiar face at North West UFO-fests, was there - discussing all things ufological with Tim, Eric & co.

People watching is always fun at UFO conferences - and this one was no exception. From members of local UFO groups to Joe Bloggs who just wanted to see the film, they were all represented at this Gatley gathering. Mervyn and I spoke to a guy who claimed to be a British Airways trainee pilot - but unbeknownst to our high flying friend, we had already met him at a meeting held by another local group. At this previous meeting he had said he was a pilot, this time in the RAF. We also debated the ethics of hypnotic regression with Pauline Delcour-Minn and hubby, and the very uninteresting (of course) UFO politics with Tim M.

Tim's talk centred around his triangle research. So what's new? Tim was on top form and slated the ETHers who claim the 'triangle' is an extraterrestrial spacecraft. He paced the stage spouting forth yet more facts about his ufological enemies that no doubt made them swallow hard.

Jenny Randles gave an interesting lecture to promote her new book (for review see issue 6 & see also Jenny's article in this issue) which showed there is a possibility that the British government has been investigating the UFO subject behind closed doors.

Eric Morris was last to speak on his own encounters with MiB. Eric went off the beaten track a bit, discussing another well known 'ufologist' by the name of 'Armen Victorian'. Eric told us how 'Armen' allegedly stole some UFO related material from Eric's home whilst posing as a Man in Black. Eric topped it off by revealing this exclusively to a Sky TV crew who were filming the event for a short piece to be shown at the end of the main news. Pity they didn't decide to use it!

I had the opportunity to have a few words with said reporter and she found the whole thing rather amusing. She said "Isn't this all just rather sad?". This was reflected in the typically pathetic 'X-Files' style report that resulted.

All in all it was pretty standard fare but worth the money none-the-less, if only for the film which was - thankfully - as far removed from the 'real' phenomenon as was reasonably possible. This hasn't stopped some ufologists from whinging about the film saying it's no good because it's nothing like the 'real' phenomenon. Get a life! The film is fun - spelt F.U.N.
